

	BEDFORD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & RESCUE Standard Operating Guideline	
	Discipline: Operations	DATE: June 1, 2022
	Reference Number: F/R-08	
	APPROVED BY: Chief Janet Blankenship	
	SUBJECT: Incident Accountability	

Purpose:

This guideline establishes standard operating guidelines for Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue in accordance with NFPA 1500-39.

Scope:

This guideline is applicable to all response activities conducted under the authority of the Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue.

Definitions:

In order to account for and identify personnel working in hazard zones, it is imperative that fire and rescue agencies within Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue utilize an accountability system. A passport style accountability system is utilized to account for all personnel operating at emergency scenes.

Each apparatus will have an *apparatus identification tag*, identifying the agency and apparatus. Response members will have *individual passport name tags* identifying the individual responder. The passport system is utilized in conjunction with the Incident Management System.

Implementation

The passport accountability system is utilized to identify and track all personnel working in the hazard zone. Any incidents where significant hazards are identified require the utilization of the passport accountability tags.

Procedure/Requirements:

All apparatus in Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue will have an *apparatus identification tag* issued and affixed with Velcro near the apparatus passenger area. All fire department members will be issued three *individual passport nametags* upon membership, while all emergency medical responders will utilize the same style Velcro apparatus placard. The individual passport nametag issued to the fire department members will become part of the individual's personal protective clothing ensemble, while the apparatus identification tag shall be considered part of the apparatus basic equipment. Members with helmets shall affix the *individual identification passport nametags* to the inside rear of their helmet using a Velcro backed adhesive strip.

The following colors and markers will be utilized as various indicators:

- Red: operations outside the hazard zone, personnel not able to perform interior fire suppression activities
- Green: Firefighter I or higher certification, approved for interior and exterior operations
- Blue: EMS personnel who cannot operate in an IDLH environment

Upon entering the apparatus, personnel shall immediately remove one of their *individual identification passport nametags* and give it to the person riding in the Officer in Charge (OIC) seat, so that the *individual passport nametag* may be placed on the *apparatus identification tag*. The person riding in the passenger seat of the fire or EMS apparatus shall take the *apparatus identification tag* with the identifying information affixed to the Incident Command Post before making entry into the hazard zone. The Incident Commander or Accountability Officer will affix the tag to the Incident Management board.

It is the Incident Commander's responsibility to maintain an accurate tracking and awareness of where resources are committed at the incident; Incident Commanders are encouraged to appoint an Accountability Officer/Command Assistant to help with this task. All companies will be accountable to the Incident Commander; at no time shall freelancing be permitted. Companies shall arrive at the incident and stay intact unless individuals are given specific orders to split from crews by the Incident Commander.

The Incident Commander is also responsible for establishing a designated two in two out benchmark until a RIT company arrives to fulfill the responsibility of the Rapid Intervention Team.

Any group entering a hazard zone is required to have at minimum one operational portable radio set to the appropriately assigned tactical operations channel.

Tactical Benchmarks will be utilized during operations to reinforce accountability. The Personal Accountability Report (PAR) is a roll call of personnel assigned to an incident and an accountability report of all companies on scene. PARs will be utilized as a confirmation that each crewmember in a company is accounted for. The Division/Group Supervisor is responsible for maintaining visual, physical, or verbal contact with the crew in which they are supervising and will report a PAR at appropriate times.

Incident Commanders should request a PAR if:

- There is a report of missing or trapped personnel
- There is a change from offensive to defensive fire attack
- There is a sudden event such as flashover, back draft, collapse, etc.
- An emergency button is activated or emergency traffic received
- At 20-minute intervals when the incident is not under control
- There is a change in the Incident Commander
- Dispatch finds it necessary to call for a PAR check should the IC miss an event

Upon completion of the assignment, the person that took the *apparatus identification tag* to the Incident Command Post shall be responsible for retrieving the tag from the Incident Commander, this person shall ensure that all personnel are accounted for.

Enforcement

It is the responsibility of each agency under the direction of Bedford County Department of Fire & Rescue to implement and enforce this guideline to ensure safe operations. This commitment involves the following responsibilities:

- Personal Responsibilities: Responsible for staying with his/her crew at all times and ensuring that his/her *individual passport nametag* is on the *apparatus identification tag*.
- Company Officer Responsibilities: Responsible for keeping his/her company intact at all times and ensuring that accountability tags/reports are accurate.
- Command Responsibilities: Responsible for tracking the location of all companies. Assigning personnel or overseeing accountability tracking or personnel on scene.

Failure to comply with supplying the Incident Commander with apparatus passport containing all personnel identification tags shall prohibit the crew entering the IDLH atmosphere until the complete passport is present at the command post.